



Preliminary 2002 Census of Agriculture Data Highlights

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

FARM INFORMATION

Total Number of Farms in 2002: 2,129,226
in 1997: 2,215,876

Percent change: -3.91%

Acres of Land in Farms in 2002: 939,506,813
in 1997: 954,752,502

Percent change: -1.60%

Average Farm Size in 2002: 441 acres
in 1997: 431 acres

Farms by size of operation - only two classes show increases in number of farms,

- those with 10-49 acres (+6%)
- those with over 2,000 acres (+5%).

Thirty nine percent of farms have less than \$2500 in sales; 59% have less than \$10,000 in sales.

Only two farm value of sales categories increased in number of farms, those with less than \$2500 (+19%) and over \$500,000 in sales (+0.6%).

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Total number of operators: 3,119,573

Of the total number of operators, 847,680 (27.2%) are women.

The number of women principal operators increased by 12.62%, from 209,784 to 236,269.

Women operators are more often identified as second and third operators on a farm than as principal operators. Of second and third operators, 62.65% are women.



Principal operators of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin increased by 50.8%, 33,450 in 1997 to 50,443 in 2002

Black principal operators increased by 8.81%, from 26,785 in 1997 to 29,145 in 2002.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

(continued)

Data were collected on nearly 20% more individual American Indian or Alaska Native principal operators in the 2002 Census of Agriculture than in 1997.

For the first time in the 2002 Census, respondents were allowed to indicate more than one race. There were 7,913 multiple race principal operators in 2002.

Notable changes in principal operator characteristics:

- More (57.5%) report farming as their primary occupation in 2002 than in 1997 (47.1%)
- More (45.2%) report working 0 days off the farm in 2002 than in 1997 (37.6%)
- 11.1% of principal operators are women
- The average age of farmers increased, 1.3 years from 54.0 to 55.3.

5.7 million people live in principle operator farm households.

6.6 million live in households of up to 3 operators profiled in this Census.

Principal operator farm households have an average of 2.69 persons.

For the first time, the number of households that share in farm operation income was provided:

- The total number of households sharing farm income exceeds 2.07 million.
- Most farms (77.3%) only support one household
- 92% of all farms share income with one or two households



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